

## Exploring The Educational Role Of Lecturers: The Foundation Of Character Education Development At The Higher Education Level

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### ABSTRACT

This study explores the educational role of lecturers as the foundation for fostering character education in universities. The main focus is to identify how the practice of mentoring and integrating character material in learning can shape student character. Case studies have been conducted at several colleges to obtain a comprehensive picture. The findings show that lecturers make a significant contribution in shaping student character through daily interactions, mentoring practices, and character-oriented learning approaches. The results of the case study provide insights into diverse experiences, including successes and obstacles in implementing the role of lecturers in various university contexts. The implications of this study show the urgency of recognizing the role of lecturers as the main initiators of fostering student character. Recommendations involve concrete steps, such as special training for lecturers, integration of character material into the curriculum, interdisciplinary collaboration, and recognition of actively involved lecturers. By implementing these recommendations, universities can strengthen the role of lecturers as the foundation for character education development. Recognition of the role of lecturers in shaping student character will create a holistic educational environment, which not only advances academic aspects but also prioritizes students' personal and moral development.

## INTRODUCTION

Higher education is not only a provider of higher education but also has a major role in shaping the character of students (Culture, n.d.). Character education is a crucial aspect at this level, considering that character building is not only a responsibility of family and elementary school but also a very important stage in students' personal development (Dasrimin, 2021). Therefore, understanding the role of character education in higher education and how lecturers play a role in this process is relevant.

Character education in higher education plays a central role in shaping students into individuals who not only excel academically, but also have integrity, responsibility, and solid morality. As a bridge between high school education and professional life, colleges are responsible for engaging students in learning that involves more than just theories and facts. In this context, character education is the foundation for student development as individuals contribute positively to society (Handayani, 2021).



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College students are in the critical phase of self-development. They are undergoing a period of transition towards adulthood, during which the values and attitudes they form will form the basis for their future actions and decisions (Dasmo, 2022). Character education in college provides opportunities to deepen these values, enrich students' lives, and prepare them for real-world challenges. Lecturers, as lecturers in universities, are not only responsible for delivering academic material. They also play a key role in guiding, motivating, and shaping students' character. Lecturers are not only a source of knowledge, but also mentors who provide views, experiences, and values that shape students as more complete individuals.

The excellence of lecturers as role models allows them to have a direct impact on the development of students' character through daily classroom interactions, discussions, and mentoring. Therefore, lecturers' awareness of their role in shaping students' character and morality is very important. Lecturers can inspire and guide students towards positive personal development.

In an era of globalization and technological development, strong character and professional ethics are more important than ever (Mulyasa, 2022). Lecturers are not only instructors but also ethical advisors who help students face moral dilemmas and make the right decisions in various situations. Lecturers also play a role as examples of good practices in academics and ethical behavior, which strengthens the foundation of character education in higher education.

The importance of character education and the role of lecturers in this process create a framework that encourages students' personal development beyond academic intelligence (Mujahada, 2022). Therefore, this article will further discuss how the educational role of lecturers is the main foundation for fostering character education in universities. Through tracing the concept of character education and analyzing the role of lecturers, this article aims to provide a comprehensive view of the importance of student character development in the University of Madura college environment.

In discussing the role of lecturers in fostering student character education, several fundamental questions must be answered to provide a comprehensive picture (Agustian et al., 2023). First, how is the educational role of lecturers reflected in efforts to shape student characters? In this context, the educational role of lecturers is not only limited to delivering academic material but also includes aspects of personal development, morality, and positive values that form the basis of student character.

The second question highlights lecturers' contribution as the foundation for fostering character education in higher education. What makes the role of lecturers an important foundation for shaping student character in the academic environment? This contribution involves aspects of mentoring and the active role of lecturers as positive role models that can affect the development of student character.

By formulating these questions, this study aims to explore the educational role of lecturers in shaping student character and the extent of lecturer contributions as the foundation of character education development in universities. This article will discuss in detail the essential aspects of the role of lecturers in character education and how their contribution can be a strong foundation for student character development in the college environment.

## METHOD

### A. Research Design

This study uses a comprehensive approach to explore the role of lecturers in fostering student character education. The initial stage included an in-depth literature review to understand the conceptual framework and previous research findings related to the role of lecturers in character

education. Through this approach, research can provide detailed theoretical and practical views related to the educational role of lecturers in shaping student character.

Furthermore, the analysis of the role of lecturers in fostering character education is the main focus of this study (Fatoni, 2019). By analyzing various studies that include the concept of the role of lecturers in the context of character education, this research will seek an in-depth understanding of how lecturers can act as agents of student character building in the university environment.

### **B. Data and Samples**

To support the validity of our findings, this study will involve case studies conducted at several universities. This case study provides a real picture of the implementation of the role of lecturers in fostering character education in diverse contexts. The colleges selected will represent a variety of characteristics, including size, curriculum, and institutional culture, to ensure a broader generalization of findings.

In addition, the study will involve interviews with the lecturers and students. These interviews will allow the researcher to gain a direct perspective from the parties involved in the character education process. Structured questions will be structured to explore lecturers' experiences, views, and understanding of their role in fostering student character as well as student responses to this approach.

Data collected from interviews and case studies will be comprehensively analyzed to identify common patterns, differences, and relevant findings. This analysis will help illustrate the role of lecturers in fostering character education more clearly as well as detail the contributions and challenges that may be faced in various university contexts.

Using a holistic research design, including literature reviews, case studies, and interviews, this study aimed to present a deep understanding of the educational role of lecturers as the foundation of character education development at the college level.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. The Educational Role of Lecturers in Fostering Character Education**

The importance of the role of lecturers in shaping the character of students in higher education is becoming more evident with increasing awareness of the importance of character education (Widiatmaka & Purwoko, 2021). Lecturers not only act as knowledge givers but also as mentors and character guides. In this discussion, we will explore the educational role of lecturers with a focus on two key aspects: mentoring and guidance, and the integration of character-building materials in learning.

### **B, Mentoring and Guidance**

#### **1. Personal Relationship between Lecturers and Students**

One of the main aspects of the educational role of lecturers in fostering student character is the personal relationships built between lecturers and students (Rukiyanto et al., 2023). This relationship exceeds the limits of the usual teacher-student relationship. Lecturers who can foster positive, open, and supportive relationships with students can have a significant positive influence on the development of their character.

In this personal relationship, students feel more comfortable sharing their experiences, challenges, and dreams with the lecturers. This opens the door for more effective mentoring, allowing lecturers to provide guidance that is more specific and relevant to each student's needs and potential. Lecturers who understand students' backgrounds, interests, and goals can help them develop a strong character more effectively.



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## 2. The Role of Mentoring in Student Character Development

Mentoring is an important foundation for shaping student characteristics (Rukiyanto et al., 2023). In this context, the role of lecturers as mentors is not only limited to academic aspects but also includes personal and professional aspects. Lecturers who can provide guidance on moral values, ethics, and responsibilities can help students form a sustainable character.

Mentoring also plays a key role in guiding students through character challenges and developing personal strengths. Lecturers can be role models that inspire, provide constructive advice, and guide students through difficult decisions. Through this process, students can hone their personalities, improve their leadership qualities, and form characters that can have a positive impact on the surrounding environment.

### B. Integration of Character Building Material in Learning

#### 1. Strategy for Delivering Character Material by Lecturers

The importance of character education in higher education demands the integration of character materials into learning (Rohiyatun and Aryani 2020). Lecturers play an important role in delivering this character material in an interesting and relevant manner. Effective delivery strategies include case studies, group discussions, and thought-provoking practical activities.

Lecturers can also take advantage of technology and online resources to provide character material that students can independently access. Through a combination of innovative strategies, lecturers can ensure that character-building materials are not only passively absorbed by students but also encourage personal reflection and group discussions that can enrich their understanding.

#### 2. Relevance and Implementation of Character Material in Courses

The relevance of character material to courses taught by lecturers is the key to the success of this integration (Yusuf et al., 2019). Lecturers need to ensure that each character concept has a direct relationship with the course's academic content. For example, lecturers may include discussions on ethics and social responsibility in social science courses.

The implementation of character materials in the context of the course helps students understand the relationship between character development and academic success. This allows students to relate the values they learn to practical real-world experiences, thereby enhancing their understanding of the importance of forming strong characters throughout their lives.

Through a focus on mentoring, as well as the integration of character building materials in learning, lecturers can play a major role in shaping student character. This holistic approach creates an environment that supports personal development, ethics, and morality, making the college a place that is more than just the pursuit of academic knowledge but also a place where character and integrity are firmly built.

### Lecturers' Contribution as the Foundation for Character Education Development

The role of lecturers as the foundation of character education development in higher education is not only reflected in the learning process but also through their contribution to shaping student ethics and behavior (Warsito & Widodo, 2018). This section explores two main aspects of lecturer contribution: Ethics and Lecturer Behavior Models, and Proactivity in Overcoming Student Character Challenges.

#### A. Ethics and Lecturer Behavior Model

##### 1. Lecturers as Examples of Positive Character

One of the main contributions of lecturers as the foundation of character education development is their role as examples of positive characters. The personal ethics, integrity, and values

applied by lecturers directly influence students' views and behaviors. Lecturers who consistently show strong characters can have a profound positive impact on the development of student characters.

The importance of lecturers as role models of characters lies in their ability to shape students' attitudes and values through real examples. Lecturers who demonstrate openness, cooperation, and responsibility can inspire students to adopt these values into their daily lives. Therefore, this section explores how lecturers can become agents of positive change through ethical practices and positive behavior.

## 2. Application of Ethics in Interaction with Students

The application of ethics in the interactions of lecturers with students is an important foundation for fostering character education. Lecturers not only have academic responsibilities but also ethics that must be maintained in relationships with students. Good communication ethics, respect, and integrity in providing feedback are examples of practices that can shape students' character.

Lecturers are also responsible for demonstrating professional ethics in student assessments and evaluations. The clarity of assessment criteria, openness to feedback, and fairness in providing grades are aspects of ethics that can have a positive influence on students' character (Nafiâ & Anwar, 2020). Therefore, the application of ethics in daily interactions between lecturers and students not only creates a healthy academic environment but also supports the development of a positive character.

## B. Proactive in Overcoming Student Character Challenges

### 1. Lecturer as a Mediator of Character Conflicts

Along with contributing as role models of positive characters, lecturers also play a role as mediators of character conflicts among students (Sutrisman, 2019). Interpersonal conflicts, differences in values, and other issues can arise in academic settings. Lecturers with mediation skills can help students resolve these conflicts in both constructive and educational ways.

In this role, lecturers not only function as instructors but also as facilitators of conflict resolution. The ability of lecturers to listen to empathy, understand the perspectives of various parties, and offer fair solutions can help shape student characteristics in terms of communication skills, empathy, and constructive conflict resolution.

### 2. Proactive Measures in Detecting and Handling Student Character Problems

Lecturers must also be proactive in detecting and handling student-character problems. It involves careful observation of changes in behavior, decreased academic performance, or other signs that may indicate the presence of character problems (Makmuriana, 2021). Lecturers who have a deep understanding of their students can provide appropriate support to help them overcome character challenges.

Lecturers who are proactive in dealing with character issues can help prevent serious consequences in the future. Actions such as providing personal mentorship, directing students to support resources, and designing a specific coaching program are examples of proactive steps that professors can take to help students overcome character issues.

Through the contribution of lecturers as the foundation of character education development, ethical practices, positive behavior, and proactive actions in dealing with student character challenges, universities can become a place for strong character building. Lecturers are not only lecturers but also agents of change who are able to guide, motivate, and shape students into individuals with integrity, responsibility, and readiness to face challenges in life (Sutrisman, 2019).



## Case Studies

### A. Case Description and Analysis

#### 1. The Experience of Several Universities in Fostering Student Character

In exploring the educational role of lecturers as the foundation of character education coaching, it is important to examine the experiences of several universities that have successfully integrated aspects of character in their education.

For example, a university in East Java adopted a comprehensive character-building program. Lecturers not only provide academic material but are also actively involved in guiding students to develop integrity, leadership, and a sense of responsibility. The program involves extracurricular activities, character seminars, and a holistic approach to ensure that characters become the main focus of learning.

By contrast, other universities in East Java apply a more integrated approach to their curricula. Lecturers incorporate character material into core courses, ensuring that values are integrated with academic content. Students are involved in challenging projects, which not only hone their academic skills but also shape their character through challenges and responsibilities.

#### 2. Successes and Obstacles in the Implementation of the Role of Lecturers

Universities often face challenges and achieve diverse successes in implementing the role of lecturers as the foundation of character education development. A case study at the University of Madura revealed that success in fostering student character depends on lecturers' commitment to actively involve themselves in this process. Lecturers who are involved in activities outside the classroom, such as mentoring, group discussions, and collaborative projects, can shape student characters more effectively.

In other universities, barriers arise in the form of inequalities in lecturers' approaches to character-building. Some lecturers focus more on the academic aspect, while others may lack an understanding of their role in guiding students. This highlights the need for greater training and institutional support for lecturers to play their roles more effectively.

In addition, administrative and curriculum barriers can affect the implementation of the role of lecturers. Colleges with overly dense curricula or complex administrative requirements may have difficulty slipping character education into their study courses. Therefore, it is important to create an environment that supports and encourages lecturers in fostering student character.

Nevertheless, some universities have achieved success by utilizing the cooperation between lecturers and administrative parties. Colleges with character development teams consisting of lecturers, academic staff, and psychologists are able to design more holistic and integrated programs. This success shows that cross-disciplinary collaboration can be key to shaping student characteristics.

Through this case study, we can conclude that successful implementation of the role of lecturers in fostering student character depends largely on the commitment, understanding, and support provided by the university itself. Detecting and overcoming obstacles is an important step in creating an environment that supports students' character development in higher education.

In conclusion, this case study provides a real picture of various university experiences in fostering student characteristics. The success and obstacles faced by each institution can provide valuable insights into how to optimize the role of lecturers as the foundation of character education coaching. By understanding the context and factors that influence its implementation, universities can take strategic steps to improve the quality of character education at the college level.

## CONCLUSION

In the context of the role of lecturers as the foundation for fostering character education in universities, the research findings confirm the importance of lecturers' contributions in shaping student character. Through the practice of mentoring, guidance, and integration of character material in learning, lecturers can become pioneers of significant change in the world of higher education. The results of the case study provide an overview of the successes and obstacles in the implementation of the role of lecturers, reflecting the variety of experiences in various universities.

Based on these findings, implications and recommendations emerged as a guide for further improvement. The research findings confirm the urgency of recognizing the role of lecturers as the main initiators of fostering student character. Universities need to provide firm support and appreciation to lecturers so that they can be effectively involved in shaping students' character.

The steps to improve the role of lecturers as the foundation of character education development in universities include special training and development, integration of character material into the curriculum, interdisciplinary collaboration, and giving recognition and appreciation to lecturers who are actively involved in character building. By taking these steps, universities can strengthen the role of lecturers as the foundation of character education coaching, creating an educational environment that not only advances academic aspects but also prioritizes students' personal and moral development.

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